INFORMATION TO USERS

This material was produced from a microfilm copy of the original document. While the most advanced technological means to photograph and reproduce this document have been used, the quality is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original submitted.

The following explanation of techniques is provided to help you understand markings or patterns which may appear on this reproduction.

1. The sign or "target" for pages apparently lacking from the document photographed is "Missing Page(s)". If it was possible to obtain the missing page(s) or section, they are spliced into the film along with adjacent pages. This may have necessitated cutting thru an image and duplicating adjacent pages to insure you complete continuity.

2. When an image on the film is obliterated with a large round black mark, it is an indication that the photographer suspected that the copy may have moved during exposure and thus cause a blurred image. You will find a good image of the page in the adjacent frame.

3. When a map, drawing or chart, etc., was part of the material being photographed the photographer followed a definite method in "sectioning" the material. It is customary to begin photoing at the upper left hand corner of a large sheet and to continue photoing from left to right in equal sections with a small overlap. If necessary, sectioning is continued again — beginning below the first row and continuing on until complete.

4. The majority of users indicate that the textual content is of greatest value, however, a somewhat higher quality reproduction could be made from "photographs" if essential to the understanding of the dissertation. Silver prints of "photographs" may be ordered at additional charge by writing the Order Department, giving the catalog number, title, author and specific pages you wish reproduced.

5. PLEASE NOTE: Some pages may have indistinct print. Filmed as received.

Xerox University Microfilms
300 North Zeeb Road
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106

PREVIEW

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

74-11,922

STAUBITZ, Richard Louis, 1942-
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SYSTEM OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT (1888-1890) IN MEIJI JAPAN: YAMAGATA ARITOMO AND THE MEANING OF "JICHI" (SELF-GOVERNMENT).

Yale University, Ph.D., 1973
History, modern

University Microfilms, A XEROX Company, Ann Arbor, Michigan

PREVIEW

© Copyright by
RICHARD LOUIS STAUBITZ
1974

THIS DISSERTATION HAS BEEN MICROFILMED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SYSTEM OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT (1888-1890) IN MEIJI JAPAN: YAMAGATA ARITOMO AND THE MEANING OF "JICHI" (SELF-GOVERNMENT)

by

Richard Louis Staubitz

PREVIEW

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Yale University in Candidacy for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

1973

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

SUMMARY

The Establishment of the System of Local Self-Government (1888-1890) in Meiji Japan: Yamagata Aritomo and the Meaning of "Jichi" (Self-Government)

This dissertation is not a history of local administration in Meiji Japan. It neither offers a detailed description of the System of Local Self-Government (chihō jichi seido) created by the several local government laws of 1888-1890, nor an analysis of the actual working of the new system. Instead, I have concentrated on the political meaning of the System of Local Self-Government for Yamagata Aritomo and Ōmori Shōichi, the main architects of the system.

Interpretations of the System of Local Self-Government have tended toward the view that the local administrative system was one of the devices created by the Meiji "oligarchs" in their desire to establish an absolutist political system. Examination of the thought of Yamagata and Ōmori, however, reveals that they did not intend the new system of local government to be a bureaucratic control device. The new system had for them socio-political implications which transcended its purely bureaucratic functions. Yamagata and Ōmori intended the local administrative system as the basis for a nation-state of a modern, progressive type. They were less concerned with extending stronger control to the local levels than they were with providing the means for peacefully integrating the masses of the people into the political life of the nation. They hoped by this means to harness the energies of the people to transform Japan into a modern nation, capable of competing with the nations of the West.

The meaning of the new local government system to Yamagata must be sought in how he understood the term "self-government" (jichi). This is not self-evident. Nor can it be understood by using preconceived definitions. The meaning of "self-government" as Yamagata used it must be understood within the specific context of his thought and the wider context of the problems to which he hoped this idea would be a solution. Consequently, considerable emphasis is placed upon Yamagata's choice of the formula of "local self-government" as expounded by the German jurists Rudolf von Gneist and Albert Mosse for reform of local administration in Japan. The influence of Gneist's and Mosse's thought on the System of Local Self-Government was powerful and pervasive. A proper understanding of how Yamagata conceived of the new local government system is best expressed in their socio-political theories. But Yamagata's acceptance of their ideas was not a case of indiscriminate borrowing of Western values. Linking Yamagata and the German theorists were shared attitudes toward society. Therefore an understanding of the Gneist-Mosse formula of "local self-government" provides important insights into Yamagata's political perspective.

The local government laws established in 1888-1890 were not an accurate reflection of Yamagata's thought. His approach to reform of local administration carried with it a particular pattern of political modernization. By his advocacy of the introduction of the Gneist-Mosse formula of "local self-government" he attempted to introduce his own conception of the nature of the constitutional order. This approach ran counter to the strongly held convictions of other major figures within the government. Opposition from his colleagues within the government limited the extent of the reforms Yamagata wished to introduce.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
Preface		iv
Chapter 1	First Efforts at Creating a Comprehensive Policy for Local Government	1
	A Centralizing Approach to Local Administration: the Ku System, 9	
	A Decentralized Approach to Local Administration: the Three New Laws, 20	
Chapter 2	The Search for a More Permanent Basis for Local Government Reform, 1882-1887	34
	The Political Crisis of 1881 and the Issue of Constitutional Government, 34	
	Itō Hirobumi's Constitutional Investigation in Europe: Administrative Reform as a Prelude to Constitutional Government, 40	
	Yamagata as Head of the Sangi-in: Popular Discontent and the Need for Administrative Reform, 47	
	Yamagata as Home Minister: First Efforts at Composing a New Local Government Law, 61	
	The Choice of the German Model for Local Government Reform, 70	
Chapter 3	The German Model: Gneist, Mosse and the Theory of Local Self-Government	80
	Rudolf Gneist's Concept of Local Self-Government: Theory in the Prussian Tradition, 81	
	Albert Mosse: the Disciple and His Views, 96	
	The Theory of Self-Government and Prussian Politics, 119	

PREVIEW

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Page

Chapter 4 The Adaptation of the Theory of Local Self-Government in Japan 123

Ōmori Shōichi: The Fusion of German and Japanese Ideas, 124

Yamagata Aritomo: Local Self-Government and the Idea of Imperial Government, 147

From Theory to Implementation: The Village Level, 159

From Theory to Defeat: The District and Prefectural Systems, 172

Chapter 5 The System of Local Self-Government and Its Opponents 181

The Prefectural Bureaucracy, 182

The Genrō-in, 196

The Cabinet, 210

Yamagata's European Trip and the Defeat of the Prefectural System, 224

Conclusion 229

Appendix A 235

Bibliography 238

PREVIEW

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

PREFACE

> The preface is the first and last thing in a book.
> It either explains the book's purpose or else
> defends it against the attacks of critics.
>
> Lermontov, A Hero of Our Time

The Meiji Restoration of 1868 formally brought to an end the governmental organization created by the Tokugawa House during the seventeenth century which has been known in later years as the baku-han system. The baku-han system was basically a federal system in which the dominant power held by the Tokugawa bakufu, or shogunate, was exercised to control the semi-independent daimyo who administered local domains known as han. The Tokugawa regime brought peace to Japan for over two centuries, but it did not bring truly unified national government. In the years after the Tokugawa House established its hegemony over the daimyo, further centralization of power did in fact occur, but not between the bakufu and han. Although both shogun and daimyo succeeded in improving control over their domains, the bakufu made little effort to increase its control over the daimyo after the middle of the seventeenth century. Essential to the equilibrium of the baku-han system was the autonomy of the individual daimyo in the internal administration of their domains. The bakufu remained in actual practice a private organ for the management and exploitation of Tokugawa lands. To insure Tokugawa hegemony the bakufu did perform public functions, but only insofar as necessary to maintain the proper balance of political forces.

PREVIEW

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The private nature of the Tokugawa shogunate was called into question during the early nineteenth century by the problem of national defense created by the appearance of Western intruders on Japan's frontiers. Suddenly expected to exercise real national leadership, the officials of the bakufu found they had neither an effective fighting force not the political authority to create one. It was precisely the bakufu's attempts to acquire effective national authority that provided the catalyst to mobilize the forces which eventually caused the downfall of the Tokugawa House in the name of an imperial restoration.

The primary goal of the Restoration had been the elimination of Tokugawa dominance rather than any social or economic reorganization of the country. Little thought had been given to the direction which any authority which might replace the Tokugawa should take. A new central administration was established in the name of the emperor in 1868, but effective political power continued to remain in the han. The han, however, were unwilling, for the most part, to commit themselves to a united national effort, and their tardiness allowed a group of reformers within the central government to seize the initiative. Aware of the limitations of the old baku-han system, with its multiple centers of autonomous power, the reform leaders were convinced of the necessity of centralizing governmental power and administration under one authority. This conviction provided the primary motivation for political reform; the West provided relevant models to choose from at the same time that it constituted a challenge to Japan's overall national security. Thus, the political reforms of the Meiji era (1868-1912) were characterized by a synthesis

PREVIEW

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

between traditional Japanese practices and conscious attempts to draw on foreign models.

In the spring of 1868, the reform leaders of the Meiji imperial government issued a policy statement now known as the Charter Oath. Article 5 read: "Knowledge shall be sought for throughout the world, and thereby the Imperial Foundations shall be greatly enhanced." One of the unique features of the Japanese bid for modernity was the Meiji leaders' concern to evaluate systematically the offerings of Western civilization. These investigations were directed not only to the technology of the industrial revolution but also to the political and institutional features of the Western nation-state. What was to be decisive for the future political development of Japan was the belief of key leaders in the Meiji government in the inherent superiority of Western political institutions, and the conviction that these models could be utilized to make Japan a strong nation. Between 1868 and 1889 the leading figures of the new Japanese government brought about a major, systematic reordering of the formal governmental structure. One facet of this was a comprehensive law governing local administration, which is the topic of this dissertation.

The importance of the System of Local Self-Government[1] in the achievement of the modern Japanese state has been recognized by Japanese and Western authors. But the tendency among such authors has been to view

---

1. For narrative convenience, the Town and Village Law (chōsonsei) and the City Law (shisei) enacted in 1888 and the Law for Urban and Rural Prefectures (fukensei) and the District Law (gunsei) enacted in 1890 are referred to collectively as the System of Local Self-Government. In addition, this convention is used to emphasize the political, rather than the legal, aspects of the new system. In the writings of Yamagata Aritomo and Ōmori Shōichi, this convention is used frequently in a similar manner.

PREVIEW

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the local administrative system as one of several devices used by the Meiji "oligarchs" in their effort to create a highly centralized state, a sort of bureaucratic absolutism. Local administration has been looked upon as being subservient to the interests of centralization.

This interpretation raises two distinct analytic problems. First, it raises the question of whether centralized power necessarily means centralized administration. The difficulty here is the meaning of the term "centralization." For, as Tocqueville so appropriately observed, "'centralization' is now a word constantly repeated, but is one that, generally speaking, no one tries to define accurately."[2] The second problem stems from the difficulties of determining how the Meiji leaders themselves conceived of the relationship between administrative and governmental "centralization." The need for a strong, unified state was acknowledged by all political figures at this time. But these same leaders were not necessarily in agreement about how national unity or strength could best be achieved. In interpreting the Meiji leaders' often stated ambition of creating a strong nation by centralizing power in the state, the historian faces a two-fold problem. He must come to terms in his own mind with the question of whether centralized power necessarily requires centralized administration. At the same time, he must recognize that the question of centralization formed the crux of the most serious policy debates and political struggles of the early Meiji period. As might be expected, the issue which most clearly revealed

---

2. Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America, trans., George Lawrence, ed., J. P. Mayer and Max Lerner (New York, 1968), Vol. 1, p. 107.

PREVIEW

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

these different approaches to the concept of "centralization of power" was the question of reform of local administration.

As this dissertation will attempt to demonstrate, the System of Local Self-Government was not seen by Yamagata Aritomo and Ōmori Shōichi,[3] the principal architects of the new system, as simply the finishing touch to an administrative apparatus designed to extend more complete central control to the local level. Rather, the new system had socio-political implications for its designers which transcended its purely bureaucratic functions. For them it was intended as the corner stone for the creation not of a bureaucratic absolutism but rather a nation-state of a modern and progressive type. Yamagata and Ōmori were concerned less with extending more effective control to the local level than with integrating the local level into the new nation and thereby drawing the energies of the masses of the people into national political life. The meaning of the new system of local government to them is tied intimately to the meaning of the term "self-government" (jichi), and this is in no way self-apparent or susceptible to a priori interpretations. It must be understood within the specific context of their thought and the wider context of the problems to which these ideas were a reaction.

Ōmori Shōichi, who became the chief apologist for the theory of local self-government in Japan, has divided the history of the effort to establish an effective local government system into three broad

---

3. See Appendix A.

PREVIEW

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

periods.[4] The first, from the Meiji Restoration in 1868, until the establishment of the so-called Three New Laws (San Shimpō) in 1878, was the period in which a unified state was created. During this decade both governmental authority and function were centralized by the state so that any autonomous powers which local regions might presume to have were subsumed into the state. At the national level, the first formal step to penetrate the autonomy of the han occurred in 1869 when the daimyo surrendered their domains to the emperor--although they remained as governors--and the han were converted into prefectures. With the establishment of the fuken (prefectural) system in 1871, the country was unified and power centralized, at least in form. At the local level, the extension of central authority was less clearly perceived, but real nonetheless. The first officials of the central government to appear at the village level were the kochō who were in charge of districts (ku) created as administrative divisions by the Household Registration Act in 1871. Although their functions ostensibly were connected with the national census, they increasingly became the agents of local administration for the government. In 1872 the traditional organizational names of the offices of village government in the old baku-han system, such as nanushi and shōya (headman), were abolished and the new terms kuchō and kochō were substituted. Soon not only the names but the functions of local offices changed. No longer were they conceived of as offices of village government but rather as part of the central administrative apparatus, with quasi-official status.

---

4. Ōmori Shōichi, "Jichisei seitei no temmatsu," ed., Ueno Tashichirō (Tokyo, 1916), pp. 8-9, Ōmori Collection, Tokyo Institute For Municipal Research. Hereafter cited as TIMR.

PREVIEW

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The second period began with the introduction of the Three New Laws, which provided the first effective organizational structure for local administration. The organizational changes in local administration in the preceding decade had been made, according to Ōmori, purely for the convenience of the central government. However, this had not proved to be a wise policy. Because these measures had failed to take into account the experience of village self-government which had developed during the Tokugawa period, they met strong opposition in the villages. This, in Ōmori's opinion, contributed greatly to the political unrest of the early 1870's. The seriousness of this situation was first recognized, according to Ōmori's account, by Kido Kōin, who, although firmly convinced of the need to centralize power in the new government, believed that constitutional government based on a system of local self-government was required to make Japan a strong state. Following the settlement of the various internal upheavals of the mid-1870's, Ōkubo Toshimichi took the first step towards this objective with his proposals for the reorganization of the local government structure. Ōkubo's proposals were incorporated into the Three New Laws, which provided for, among other things, the formation of prefectural assemblies and for the public election of village officials. Thus, the ten year period following the introduction of these laws was, for Ōmori, an era of increased decentralization during which certain administrative functions which had been handled by the central government were returned to the local regions. It was also marked by an era of extensive political activity as political party organizations mobilized local interests to join the movement to pressure for representative government.

PREVIEW

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The third stage in the evolution of local administration in the Meiji period, according to Ōmori's outline, began with the promulgation in 1888 of the Code for Towns and Villages and the City Code. It was with these codes and the subsequent District and Prefectural Codes of 1890 that what Ōmori considered true local self-government was introduced in Japan, a system in which the proper balance between central and local authorities was finally struck.

In this historiographical schema, Ōmori carefully distinguished between the concepts of administrative decentralization and local self-government. He noted that administrative decentralization introduced by the Three New Laws was similar in many respects to self-government, but that it could not truly be termed self-government. Clearly in his mind the distinction between these two concepts was important. And this in turn is important for the purposes of our topic. A similar distinction in terminology can be seen in the evolution of Yamagata's thinking concerning local administration. In the period from 1881-1885 when he first became involved with the question of reform of local government he conceived of the problem of changes in "local administration" in a bureaucratic sense. However, in the post-1885 period his concern was to effect reform through the introduction of a system of "local self-government" based on the political principles of the German jurists Rudolf Gneist and Albert Mosse. The fundamental importance which Yamagata attached to this change in approach was underscored in a speech presented by him on February 13, 1888 explaining the intention of the new system to an assembly of local government officials. After enumerating the various

PREVIEW

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

changes which had taken place in local government since 1878, he continued, "the reason why we gave permission for self-government at the local level [chihō no jichi] and why we established a system of administrative decentralization [bunken no sei] is that these principles and those of the aforementioned laws and ordinances are completely different [mattaku zenjutsu no hōrei to, sono shushi wo koto ni seri]." [5]

It needs to be stressed that these differences in terminology are important if we are to understand what Yamagata and Ōmori hoped to accomplish through the introduction of what they termed local self-government; we are not engaged in semantical hair-splitting. The terms "decentralization of administration," "local self-government," and "local administration" meant quite different things to them, as they do in the vocabulary of political theory. The terms are by no means interchangeable, for they carry with them important differences of connotation of how the local levels of government relate to the state. As W. Hardy Wickwar has shown in his study The Political Theory of Local Government, for each stage in the development of the modern state there has been a corresponding stage in the evolution of local government with its own characteristic philosophy of local government which attempts to resolve the question "is Local Government Self-Government, or is it a creature of the State." [6]

---

5. Yamagata Aritomo, "Chōhei seido oyobi jichi seido kakuritsu no enkaku" in Kokka Gakkai, Meiji kensei keizai shiron (Tokyo, 1919), p. 408. Hereafter cited as Shiron.

6. W. Hardy Wickwar, The Political Theory of Local Government (Columbia, S.C., 1970), pp. v-vii; p. 1.

PREVIEW

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Thus, although this dissertation is intended as a study in institutional history and not in intellectual history, its central concern is with the political content of the System of Local Self-Government rather than with a description of the system or its actual working. The basic assumption of this approach is that it is by means of an understanding of what men try to accomplish through their political institutions that an evaluation of these institutions can be made. Political concepts reveal the direction in which men hope to move society as well as the nature of the problems to which these hopes are an answer. Taken in this fashion a study of the establishment of the System of Local Self-Government in Japan takes on special significance.

The importance of Japan's modernization from a comparative perspective is not simply that it was the first non-Western nation to modernize. For despite Japan's Oriental heritage, it is clear that the problems confronting the leaders of Meiji Japan, and their reactions to them, were remarkably similar to those with which political thinkers and leaders in the West had to struggle. This observation has important implications for the phenomenon of "institutional transfer" in the Meiji period. The "Western impact" was not a monolithic force which engulfed Japan. The choice by Japanese leaders of particular institutions or sets of ideas as models was based on the realities of their political objectives and their basic outlook toward the needs of their society.

All of these considerations are revealed in the story of Yamagata's involvement in local government reform. The range of choices open to Yamagata concerning approaches to local government reform was

PREVIEW

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

restricted severely by objective and subjective historical conditions. He, as well as his colleagues in the government, accepted the need for a strong state in which authority was concentrated in the imperial institution as a precondition not only for survival but also for the advancement of the national culture. The political crisis of 1881, at which time the decision was made to prepare by 1890 a formal constitution for Japan, brought agreement among the leaders of the main factions within the government that German political institutions would be the most appropriate institutional models to emulate in preparing a constitutional order. But other than generally specifying a preference for a Prussian-style government the political settlement of 1881 gave the Meiji leaders freedom to choose from among the various different strains of thought permeating the intellectual and political life of nineteenth century Germany. Within this narrow range individual Japanese leaders possessed the discretion to choose the approach most congenial to their interpretation of the specific needs of the Japanese nation. And they exercised that freedom, even though at times their choices were in conflict with the viewpoint of others within the government. In choosing the approach of Gneist and Mosse in the area of local government reform, that is, by favoring their formula of "local self-government" as the basic principle of local administration, Yamagata was revealing, in fact, his conception of the direction in which the state should develop. Examination of the political content of the Gneist-Mosse formula can reveal the extent of the choice Yamagata wished to exercise on behalf of his country.

PREVIEW

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

It is important to note, moreover, that in opting for the ideas of Gneist and Mosse, Yamagata was making a conscious choice based on his own political perspectives and personally thought-out objectives. The influence of Gneist and Mosse on the System of Local Self-Government as put into effect in Japan was powerful and pervasive. A true understanding of what Yamagata and Ōmori meant by the term "local self-government" and the role which they hoped it would play in the newly established polity is best expressed in the socio-political theories of Gneist and Mosse. But this does not lead to the conclusion that Yamagata simply took what Germany had to offer blindly. What links Yamagata and Ōmori with Gneist and Mosse is not the simple fact that the former borrowed the theories and hired the expertise of the latter. Rather, as this dissertation will suggest, the more fundamental denominator linking these men was the fact that all four, Japanese and German, shared certain fundamental attitudes toward the nature of society and the forces which bind men together. Thus, though it is possible to approach the thought of Yamagata and Ōmori as being derivative of the German model, this was surely not the whole story. They were not mere imitators or copiers. They, just as European political leaders, had to define in their own minds the nature of their traditional society and how this related to the new forces which were reshaping the modern world. It is their attempts to reconcile tradition and modernity in the Japanese context which gives them the right to be considered as political thinkers in their own rights, concerned with problems to which the ideas of Gneist and Mosse were but one part of the solution.

PREVIEW

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

However, it must be recognized that what Yamagata wanted to implement in the way of local government reform was not what was in fact implemented. The final version of the System of Local Self-Government as enacted by the various laws of 1888 and 1890 fell far short of achieving Yamagata's original proposals, particularly for the district and prefectural systems. In adopting the Gneist-Mosse approach to local government reform Yamagata found himself in conflict with others within the Meiji government. The German theory of local self-government was more than a formula for administrative practice. It carried within it a particular pattern of political modernization which ran counter to the strongly held convictions of other major figures and centers of power within the Meiji government. In addition, ideological positions inevitably became entangled with personal political rivalries and the rivalries between various sections of the government which vied with each other for political influence. As this dissertation will suggest, opposition from three quarters--the prefectural bureaucracy, the Genrō-in, and those concerned with drafting the constitution, particularly Inoue Kowashi--combined to limit the extent of the reforms Yamagata wished to introduce.

These then are the themes and basic assumptions of this study. The reader must again be reminded of the limited scope of what is intended. It is not a history of local administration in the Meiji period but rather an analysis of the process by which the System of Local Self-Government was brought into being. The primary focus will be on the meaning of the idea of "local self-government," how it was understood

PREVIEW

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

by the various political figures and theoreticians who are the subjects of this study, and, finally, what Yamagata and Ōmori, in particular, intended in their reform efforts at the local level.

The first chapter will be a general introductory chapter examining the changes in local administration through the establishment of the Three New Laws. It will consider the political events which led to the decision for administrative decentralization, and will consider the political principles of these laws. The second chapter will discuss the events leading to the decision to adopt a system of local self-government based on the ideas of Gneist and Mosse. Both Ōmori's and Yamagata's accounts of the establishment of the System of Local Self-Government stress Yamagata's commitment to the introduction of such a system. But they tend to gloss over the search for a more permanent basis for local government reform which took place in the early 1880's. Although there can be little doubt about Yamagata's eventual commitment to the new system, the fact remains that there were several competing plans for the reorganization of local government at this time. Consequently, it is necessary to trace the process leading to Yamagata's rejection of these in favor of the plan he eventually thought to have adopted. That Yamagata had profound political reasons for pushing his plan can be understood only when we understand how his thinking fits into the context of the attempt to define the political form of the state which characterized the nation-building process of the 1880's. The third chapter will examine Gneist's and Mosse's theory of local self-government, particularly as it related to the broader system of

PREVIEW

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

constitutional government. The fourth chapter, which constitutes the key chapter of the dissertation, will examine how Yamagata and Ōmori understood the ideas of Gneist and Mosse and to what degree they attempted to introduce them in Japan. It will attempt, also, to explain why Yamagata and Ōmori were attracted so strongly to the Gneist-Mosse formula of self-government. The final chapter will treat the opposition to Yamagata's plan, and the nature and extent of the compromise which Yamagata had to accept in 1888-1890.

I first began research on this topic at the University of Chicago under Professor Eugene Soviak. I expanded and developed it into a dissertation under Professor John W. Hall at Yale University. I am grateful to both men for their encouragement, advice and ready help. I am particularly indebted to Professor Hall from whom I learned much about both Japanese history and writing. Professor Henry Turner of Yale also gave generously of his time for points about German history. Generous support from the Foreign Area Fellowship Program, the Council on Comparative and European Studies and the Council on East Asian Studies at Yale made this dissertation possible. I am grateful to the several libraries and institutions in Japan that made their material available to me. I also am grateful to the staffs of the Tōkyō Shisei Chōsakai of the Shakai Kagaku Kenkyūjō of Tokyo University for their always kind assistance.

R.L.S.

New Haven
October 1973

PREVIEW

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Chapter 1

FIRST EFFORTS AT CREATING A COMPREHENSIVE POLICY FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

On January 3, 1868, armed contingents from loyalist *han* seized the imperial palace in Kyoto and announced the restoration of imperial rule. The court, which had been secretly negotiating with loyalist leaders, was easily persuaded to abolish the shogunate, and a provisional government was established from which all adherents of the Tokugawa cause were excluded. This *coup d'état*, now known as the Meiji Restoration of 1868, brought to a sudden end 250 years of Tokugawa hegemony. It also placed formal administration of the country in the hands of the emperor for the first time in more than seven centuries.

But in the first hectic years following the Restoration direct imperial rule was largely fictional, except in the territories confiscated from the Tokugawa House. Individual *daimyo* retained control of their domains, and the new government was dependent for its existence on the military strength of Satsuma and Chōshū and the prestige of the court. The precariousness of the Restoration government's position was recognized by the *samurai* activists who had led the Restoration movement, and they became the driving force for the creation of centralized government. Even before the last of the Tokugawa supporters had been defeated in Hokkaido in 1869 these men had initiated measures designed to consolidate imperial government.

PREVIEW

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

One of the most important tasks confronting the Meiji leaders was to make the han politically responsive to the central government. It would have been meaningless for the new group of leaders to have consolidated their own position through reorganization of the central organs of government if they had been unable to extend government control to the local level. The Meiji government at first had neither the financial resources nor the armed forces to establish government control by force. Instead, the Meiji leaders resorted to the slower, but more effective method of gradually incorporating the han and their administrative structure into the national administrative network.[1]

The first step towards the establishment of a unified national administration was the announcement in June 1868 of the Seitaisho, Japan's first systematic plan for government. The Seitaisho combined traditional bureaucratic practices with Western ideas of representation and constitutional division of powers. The new government, called the Dajōkan, was divided into executive, legislative and judiciary branches. The executive supervised five departments, as well as the lands which had been seized from the Tokugawa House. Imperial territories were divided into ken (prefectures) and fu (municipalities), and were administered by imperial appointees. A series of imperial decrees after the promulgation of the Seitaisho simplified and systematized administration within these areas. On May 19, 1868 a Department of Civil Affairs (Mimbushō)

1. This process is illustrated by the example of Okayama prefecture. For details see John Whitney Hall, "From Tokugawa to Meiji in Japanese Local Administration," Studies in the Institutional History of Modern Japan (Princeton, 1968), ed., John W. Hall & Marius B. Jansen, pp. 375-386 (hereafter cited as Studies). Also, Ardath W. Burke, "Administrative Transition from Han to Ken," Far Eastern Quarterly, Vol. 15, No. 3 (May 1956), pp. 371-382.

PREVIEW

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

was established and given control of local administration in imperial territories.[2]

The administrative pattern of these imperial areas became the model according to which the daimyo were instructed on December 11, 1868 to conform in order to bring some degree of uniformity into fu, ken and han administration. But although there was a standardization of offices and terminology, the han continued to be recognized as the territories of the daimyo.[3] This first tentative step increased the ability of the government to influence the han, but no true central authority was possible as long as the government was faced with the task of co-ordinating the administration and policies of 276 han with its own policies and administrative practices.

A more important step towards the creation of a truly centralized polity was the surrender by the daimyo of their documents of enfoefment which they had received from the shogun and their land registers to the emperor in 1869. The retrocession of the han was more a symbolic than an actual extension of central government control. The territorial identity of each han was maintained and the former daimyo and his officials were reappointed as the executive branch of the new administrative unit. But an important precedent had been set. The han was no longer recognized as the personal possession of the daimyo, and the status of the daimyo was changed from that of a feudal retainer to that of imperial appointee.

---

2. For details see Robert A. Wilson, The Genesis of the Meiji Government in Japan, 1868-1871 (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1957), pp. 34-65. 34-65.

3. W. G. Beasley, The Meiji Restoration (Stanford, 1972), p. 324.

PREVIEW

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Reproduced with permission of copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.